

Programmed to Love You

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Programmed to Love You

by [Rambling Things](#)

Summary

Self-indulgent high school au where Will's head of the robotics club and bumps into the mysterious new student at his school. Obviously chaos and romance ensues. Also Hannibal's still the Chesapeake Ripper, so that's fun and fresh.

Featuring oblivious Will Graham, long-suffering best friend Beverly Katz, lovestruck Hannibal Lecter, and a plethora of other characters.

Notes

Big thanks to my friend ace for helping me come up with this idea, couldn't have done it without you bestie <3

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Chapter One

Will ran his hands along the seams of his jeans, drumming his fingers methodically on his thighs.

Beverly was walking next to him, both of them weaving through the sea of highschoolers to their lockers.

Bev adjusted the straps of her backpack and tapped Will's ear. He removed his earbud and tilted his head towards her questioningly.

"Did you hear about the new guy that transferred here this semester?" She asked. Will shrugged noncommittally, continuing to tap out rhythms on his leg with his left hand.

"Yeah, I heard he's some rich asshole who magically became captain of the swim team after a week," he said, rolling his eyes.

Bev laughed, shoving him lightly. "Jealous much Graham? Anyway, I also heard he's European, and has cheekbones to die for." She cocked an eyebrow, winking and elbowing Will.

He barked a laugh, elbowing her back.

"Haha, very funny Katz. Sorry but I think I'm good without a rich bitch boyfriend. Why don't you go oggle the volleyball team or something," he grouched. Bev gasped and slapped his arm.

"That was one time, Will! I told you that in confidence."

They made it to their lockers, and Will turned to put his books away.

"It's not my fault you don't have the balls to ask Molly out! You keep staring at her during games, it's getting creepy," he said, giving her a pointed look.

Beverly shoved her backpack into her locker and slammed it shut.

"Oh cram it Graham, go play with your robots or something. I've gotta get to class, smell you later." She waved over her shoulder at Will, who promptly stuck his tongue out at her.

He laughed, grabbing the books he needed and putting his earbud back in. The noise of the hallway immediately subsided into a low thrum, and he sighed in relief. He shut his locker, opening the top book on the stack and starting the walk to his class.

Will tuned out his surroundings, too focused on the book he was reading to notice when he walked straight into someone.

They both crashed to the floor, the other person's hot coffee spilling all over Will.

"Ow, shit!" Will yelped.

The other person started babbling apologies, but Will was too busy taking off his sweatshirt to see who it was.

Once it was over his head, he saw that it was the new guy, who was still apologizing and scrambling to pick up Will's books off the floor.

Will stood up, folding his sweatshirt over his arm.

"Hey man, no hard feelings, it was my fault anyway," he said, offering a hand to him.

The new guy— Will still didn't know his name— was still kneeling on the floor with Will's

books in his hands.

He didn't move to accept Will's hand, instead just staring at him. Will shifted on his feet, popping his earbud out and huffing exaggeratedly. "Look dude it's no big deal, just give me my books and I'll be on my way."

The new guy still didn't take his hand, instead pushing himself to his feet, still looking at Will with an unreadable expression. Will clenched his jaw in annoyance.

"What the fuck are you looking at? Never seen a binder before dipshit?" He moved to snatch his books, but the new guy seemed to break out of his haze and stuck his hand out to stop Will.

"No, ah. I— I believe we've gotten off on the wrong foot." He rubbed the back of his neck anxiously. "Apologies for ruining your shirt, I'll pay for the dry cleaning cost."

Will huffed a laugh.

"Don't bother, probably costs more than it's worth. I'll just grab one from the lost and found, no worries."

He reached for his books again, and started heading for the office.

As he turned, the new guy grabbed his arm. "Actually, might I accompany you to the office? It's the least I can do after, well you know," he said, and Will would swear he was blushing.

He shrugged, tugging his arm free. "Yeah sure whatever, I'm not your mom." They started walking side by side, the hallway almost completely empty by now. Will fidgeted with the sleeves of his sweatshirt, unsure of what to say.

The new guy finally broke the silence with an introduction. "My name's Hannibal, Hannibal Lecter. I don't think I ever quite caught yours?" Will slapped a hand over his mouth, unable to stop the sharp laugh that escaped him.

Hannibal looked confused at his sudden outburst. "What did I say?"

"Your name fucking rhymes with 'cannibal'? That's hilarious dude," he laughed.

Hannibal blinked at him, before laughing softly himself. "I suppose it does, I'd never really thought about it before. I still didn't quite catch your name?" He prompted again. Will nodded.

"Oh, uh— yeah. My name's Graham, Will Graham. Forgot you're new here. Speaking of, what do you think of the place so far?" He raised an arm, gesturing vaguely at the school.

Hannibal glanced around for a moment before answering.

"It's— it's not so different I suppose." Will laughed, bumping him with his shoulder.

"Could be worse, huh?" Hannibal smiled, fiddling with the strap of his messenger bag. "I guess so."

He paused for a moment, looking at Will questioningly.

"Forgive me for asking, but are you a Wilbur or a William?"

Will readjusted his books. "Oh, uh. I'm neither, it's just Will," he said.

Hannibal looked surprised. "Your mother must be a very straightforward woman then."

Will stopped, looking at Hannibal dumbfounded.

"I chose it myself, dipshit. Besides, I don't think I can take criticism from someone named Hannibal," he chuckled, shoving Hannibal softly with his free arm. Hannibal looked confused for a moment, before a look of realization dawned on his face. He turned a light shade of

pink, and had the decency to look sheepish.

"Ah I see. I truly meant no offense Will," he said apologetically.

Will shrugged. "Nothing to apologize for, you didn't know. It's cool."

They finally made it to the office, and Will handed Hannibal his books before ducking inside to grab a shirt from lost and found.

He waved to the secretary, gesturing at his shirt issue.

She nodded, letting him rifle through the tub of lost and found items until he found something that would fit.

He tossed on a random flannel, waved goodbye, and then headed out the door. Hannibal was still waiting there for him, flipping through one of Will's books. Will wiggled his fingers in front of his face.

"Hey princess, sorry I took so long. Thanks for holding my shit," he said, taking his books from Hannibal.

Will started off towards his class again, tossing his shirt into a trashcan as he passed. He heard the telltale squeak of rubber on linoleum, and soon Hannibal was next to him again.

"Uh, you don't have to follow me around anymore, you're relieved of your debt," he said, side-eyeing him. Hannibal turned bright red, nodding awkwardly. He reached into his bag and pulled out his class schedule, showing Will that they were actually heading to the same class.

Will nodded once in acknowledgment and shoved his earbud back in. Hannibal seemed relieved that he didn't initiate further conversation, and eventually they made it to class.

Will slipped into his normal desk in the back of the class by the window, surprised to see Hannibal follow suit, opting for the one closest to the door.

Will was predictably, bored, through most of the class. He was already advanced in math, so normal classes were more of a formality. As he twisted and untwisted the cord of his earbuds, he snuck a glance at Hannibal.

He was diligently working on something, and Will craned his neck slightly to get a better view. He expected complex notes, hell, even mathematical equations— what he wasn't expecting was a surprisingly detailed graphite sketch of his own face. Will's eyes widened, surprised at how uncanny the resemblance was. He was so absorbed in watching Hannibal draw, he didn't realize the bell had rung until Hannibal stopped drawing.

At that moment, Will realized he'd been caught. He made eye contact with Hannibal briefly, a light flush dusting his cheeks. Hannibal snapped his sketchbook shut, and started scrambling to put his things away. Will stood up abruptly, walking over to Hannibal's desk. He twirled his headphone cord around his fingers, eyes scanning Hannibal's desk as he spoke. "Hey, I, uh. I saw the drawing you were doing, and I just wanted to say you're really fucking good. Also, I'm flattered." He paused, glancing up at Hannibal's face. "The first time we meet and you're already making art of my ugly mug? That's pretty cool."

Hannibal stopped shoving things into his bag, pausing as what Will said registered in his brain. Wordlessly, he opened his sketchbook to the page with the drawing on it. He scribbled something onto it, ripping it out and then shoving it into Will's hands before waving and speed walking out of the class.

Will was momentarily stunned, brain still processing what just occurred. He looked more closely at the paper in his hand, this time able to see each individual pencil stroke on the paper. Hannibal had drawn him mid-laugh, an expression of carefree joy captured on his features, one Will wasn't sure he'd ever seen before. He looked... nice. He'd never looked at himself that way before, and he felt a strange twist in his chest.

He scanned the bottom of the page, seeing what he assumed was Hannibal's signature. Below it was a phone number, with "H. Lecter :)" in loopy script written next to it. He rolled his eyes. Of course his handwriting looked like something that belonged at the bottom of the declaration of independence. Will quickly pulled out his phone, shooting a quick "hey princess, it's will" to the number and saving it to his phone. Will smiled, put his earbuds back in, and headed back out into the halls.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Hannibal reflects on his day and has a bit of a gay crisis.

Chapter Notes

Thanks to my bestie ace, again, for explaining ao3's interface to me. Unlike will and hannibal in this au, I'm technologically illiterate

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Hannibal sat down in the driver's seat of his car, tossing his messenger bag onto the passenger side.

He pulled out his phone, opening his messages for the millionth time since he first got the text from Will.

"hey princess, it's will"

Hannibal read the words over and over again, face turning bright red. He hadn't meant to bump into Will today, figuratively or literally, and he was still a bit amazed at the whole situation.

Hannibal stared at his phone screen, drumming one hand on the steering wheel in idle excitement. He went into school expecting a normal day, and ended up with his crushes phone number? He was still a bit dazed.

Hannibal sighed, blinking hard and putting his phone in his cup holder. He switched the radio on, and pulled out of the school parking lot.

After an uneventful drive home, he pulled into the driveway at his aunt's estate, parking and heading into the main house. Chiyoh and Mischa were in the kitchen; Mischa doing homework at the counter, Chiyoh sitting on top of it peeling an apple with a knife.

They looked up as he set his bag down on the counter.

"Anniba, you're home! How was school today?" Mischa said, smiling at him. Hannibal shrugged, walking over to the fridge, pulling out a pitcher of lemonade, and setting it on the counter.

"It was fine Mischa, how was your day?" He signed.

She tilted her head, looking up thoughtfully. "It was nice, Chiyoh and I made a new friend today!"

Chiyoh rolled her eyes. "No, *you* made a new friend, I was just there," she said. Mischa laughed, poking her shoulder. "If I weren't there, you'd never make any friends, someone has to do it for you. Anyway, her name's Abigail! She's really nice."

Hannibal shook his head fondly, patting Mischa on the shoulder and waving to Chiyoh as he left the kitchen with his glass of lemonade and his bag. Chiyoh stuck her tongue out at him before going back to her apple.

He slowly padded up the stairs to his room, shutting the door behind him.

He sighed, pressing his forehead to the cool wood. Hannibal shook his head, setting the glass down on his desk before flopping onto his bed with a dramatic huff. He threw his arm over his eyes, still overwhelmed with the day's events. He eventually calmed down a bit, wrestling his phone out of his bag one-handed and re-opening his messages.

He sat up and puzzled over a reply, pinching the bridge of his nose. Somehow *' hey, I just wanted to let you know I'm not new I'm just transgender and got my name changed recently—also I already knew your name because I have a huge crush on you, '*

didn't seem to be the right thing to say at that moment. He typed and deleted several responses before settling on;

"Hello will, I'm glad you decided to text me :]"

He quickly got a response.

"Why wouldn't I?? I'm not that much of an asshole"

“Really? That’s not what I hear”

“Kind of a bitchy thing to say princess, especially to someone you just met :/”

He rolled his eyes.

“Dipshit is a strong moniker to give during a first meeting, wouldn’t you agree?”

“Touché”

“;J”

Hannibal huffed a laugh as he put his phone down on his bed. He yawned, stretching and walking over to his closet to change.

As he pulled his sleep clothes out of the dresser inside, his phone started ringing. He was slightly confused as he hadn’t been expecting any calls. He flipped over his phone and saw it was Will. His eyes widened and he immediately answered— and promptly began panicking because he didn’t know what to say.

“...Hello?” Will’s voice crackled over the line. Hannibal cleared his throat sharply before answering.

“Hello Will, why did you call me?”

He heard a soft sigh, almost as if Will had been holding his breath.

“Oh— well, I just wanted to see if you’d answer to be completely honest.”

“Why wouldn’t I? I gave you my number to contact me, it would’ve been foolish to ignore your attempts.”

“Ugh, you sound like you swallowed a dictionary,” Will groaned.

Hannibal laughed, smiling so hard his face hurt. Here he was, sitting on his bed and talking to the guy he’d been thinking about forever. It was surreal.

They talked for a while, mostly about nothing. Will talked about his dog, and his love for welding, and Hannibal told Will about his favorite grade of charcoal to draw with (it’s 4b).

Finally Will had to go. He said something about helping his dad fix the oil pan in his truck, which Hannibal assumed was important, and said a quick goodbye before hanging up.

Hannibal realized he’d been sitting in the same cross-legged position the duration of the call and got up to stretch his legs. He walked over to his desk, seeing the glass of lemonade was now surrounded by a puddle of condensation, the ice cubes long melted.

He sighed, wiping up the water and thanking whatever god it hadn’t left a ring on the mahogany. Once the mess was cleared, he took a moment to process. He rubbed his inner wrists together in quick circles, smiling softly as he remembered all the events of the day. Just as he was getting ready to sit down and start his homework, his phone buzzed.

“Hey, it was nice talking to you, we should hang out after school sometime.”

He couldn’t wait.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry if this chapter's a little short, I just started my new job and don't have as much free time to write. Hope y'all enjoy it anyway!

(P.S. Mischa calling Hannibal "Anniba" is pulled directly from the books, specifically Hannibal Rising)

E :)

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Will has a realization with the help of his best friend Bev.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Hanging out with Hannibal became a regular part of Will's routine. After their first phone call, they'd made plans to grab something to eat after school.

They hit it off pretty well, so now they ate together at least three times a week.

Will was hesitant to branch out into anything else though, he wasn't sure if Hannibal would be receptive.

He brought it up to Beverly one night when she was staying over.

They'd just been fucking off, pretending to do homework on his bed while they hung out.

Will sighed, and pushed all his books and papers onto the floor before flopping down on his back. He smoothed his hands rhythmically over the sheets.

"Hey Bev, is it— well, do you think Hannibal would think it's weird if I invited him to hang out here? We've only really hung out in public, and I'm not sure if that's because it's routine or it's because he considers us acquaintances," He said, kicking his legs aimlessly where they hung off the bed.

"Will." She looked at him Incredulously. "That's the dumbest fucking thing you've ever said."

She scooted cross-legged down the bed to swat the back of his head.

"He looks at you like you've hung the moon, and you don't think he wants to hang out with you somewhere else? Are you on drugs?"

He flipped her off, throwing an arm over his eyes and groaning in disdain.

“Look I know it’s stupid. But he’s like, fancy and shit. I don’t know how to operate fancy, Bev. What if he thinks it’s weird?”

Her face softened, and she tapped his arm before pulling it away from his face. She leaned over his face, her hair tickling his nose.

“Do you think he really cares? I mean you guys have hung out this long, do you really think he doesn’t know that already?”

Beverly leaned back on her arms, giving him space to process what she’d said.

Will looked up at the ceiling, watching the blades of the fan rotate slowly.

Would Hannibal care? Will hadn’t really felt self conscious like this before, and he’d assumed it was because Hannibal was clearly well-off.

But, he’d never flaunted that part of himself, and he’d definitely never made Will feel bad for his lack of social etiquette.

So why was Will so anxious about this?

He moaned, rolling over and burying his face into the flannel bedspread.

Beverly laughed, patting him lightly on the back.

“Someone’s down bad, huh?” She laughed.

Will blindly flailed an arm, smacking her shins. She laughed again as he muttered a muffled “shut up” into the sheets.

He fisted his hands into the fabric, twisting and untwisting it between his fingers.

Did he really have a crush on Hannibal? Sure, Will liked hanging out with him— didn't find his company to be exhausting like most of his peers.

And he always got excited when he called or texted, even if it was something boring. Plus he was definitely easy on the eyes, even if his vocabulary was that of a tenured professor.

Oh. *Oh no.*

He pushed himself up on his forearms, making eye contact with Bev.

"I think I have a crush on Hannibal."

"No shit, Sherlock."

He narrowed his eyes, looking away.

"I expected more support for my discovery, like *"oh I'm so proud of you Will"* or *"wow how brave of you"* even."

She cackled at that, putting on her best stereotypical therapist voice.

"Oh William, it must have been *so* difficult for you to admit how fucking gay you are. I'm *so* proud of your incredible bravery." She pretended to wipe a tear from her eye.

She paused, making eye contact with Will again, before they both burst out laughing. He smacked her arm, pressing his forehead into her shoulder. Will looked up at her.

"Hey Bev?" He said softly.

“Yeah graham cracker?” She whispered back.

“Thanks for being my best friend.”

“Always.”

Then she shoved him off the bed.

Will made an indignant noise, flailing backwards and landing with a thud. Beverly cackled, doubling over in laughter. He reached his hand over the side of the bed, flipping her off from the floor.

“We were having a *moment*, you fucker,” he said in mock anger. Beverly just laughed harder, leaning over and offering him her hand.

“No, *you* were having a moment, a gay momen—” she was interrupted by Will grabbing her wrist and pulling her off the bed.

She yelped, landing in a heap on top of him. They glared at each other for a second, before breaking out into laughter.

“You’re such a dumbass,” Bev hiccupped through her laughs, resting her head on his chest.

“And you’re fucking stupid, but at least we’re even.” He brushed his hands through the ends of her hair.

“Touche, Graham.”

“Okay, time to get off now, you’re crushing me.”

Chapter End Notes

Oh hey, I'm not dead. Stuff's been crazy rn so I haven't had much time or energy to write. I worked on this chapter (again, shorter than I'd like,) for a while. Hopefully y'all still enjoy!

E :)

End Notes

Hey y'all. Honestly I don't know when/if I'll update this, but I'm hoping posting it will help keep me motivated to work on it. Also, sorry if there's a ton of inaccuracies in how the school/clubs work, I've been homeschooled since forever and honestly didn't feel like researching for hours so, yeah. It's all for fun so I'm not too worried about it.

Hope y'all enjoyed reading, and sorry for any spelling/formatting issues!
E :)

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